THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (c) The Government has been taking several steps to enhance cooperation in High Technology areas to improve trade with different countries such as USA, Russia, European Countries and Japan, etc. Some of the sectors identified as thrust areas in High Technology are Information Technology, Bio Technology, Nano Technology, Defence Technology and Space Sector. These issue are discussed in the meetings of Joint Commission/Joint Committee or the Working Groups to facilitate business to business contact and to suggest means of enhancing trade. Some these major steps in the last three years are:—

* Launching in India US High Technology Cooperative Group (HTCG) in 2003.
* India-Israel Initiative on Industrial R&D in 2005-06.
* Decision to launch a consultation mechanism to facilitate bilateral high technology trade (during the visit of PM to Japan in 2006).

Technology Summits are also organized in collaboration with our Industry Chambers to project India as an R&D hub. Similarly, India is also participating in similar technology events abroad. These measures are expected to foster cooperation and increase India's trade with other countries.

World Economic Forum meeting at Davos

2446. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the highlights of the recently concluded meeting of World Economic Forum at Davos, particularly relating to removal of farm subsidies by the EU and other Western countries;

(b) whether any consensus or agreement has been arrived at in this conference, on the question of reduction/abolition of farm subsidies by US and EU countries; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) An informal Ministerial meeting on the Doha Work Programme of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) was attended by about 30 Trade Ministers on 27 January 2007 on the margins of the World Economic Forum at Davos. The Ministers endorsed full scale resumption of negotiations. The Ministers favoured an inclusive multilateral Process, coupled with a comprehensive approach in the negotiations, to achieve a broad-based and balanced deal in keeping with the development dimension of the Doha Round.

On the margins of the World Economic Forum, the G-33 Ministers present at Davos also met on 26 January 2007 and issued a press statement conveying their readiness to engage with all WTO Members to secure their interests in the final Doha Round outcome. They emphasised the need to secure early convergence on the critical development instruments of Special Products (SPs) and Special Safeguard Mechanism (SSM).

(b) and (c) No, Sir. No consensus was reached at the meeting on the question of reduction/abolition of agricultural subsidies by the EC countries and the United States.

Globalisation of Labour at WEF

2447. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of India and its delegation, which participates in the World Economic Forum, have raised the issue of globalisation of labour;

(b) what is the number of work permits given to Indians for employment abroad; and

(c) what is the quantity of import made by Government, as a result of globalisation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND PROMOTION, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir. The matter pertaining to Mode-4